

Federal Courts of the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 10, 2021, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2021

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:30 a.m., Thursday, March 11; that following the prayer and the pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the motion to discharge the nomination of Xavier Becerra from the Committee on Finance, with the time expiring at 12 noon; further, that upon disposition of the motion to discharge, the Senate resume consideration of the nomination of DEBRA HAALAND to be Secretary of the Interior; finally, that the cloture motion on the Haaland nomination ripen at 1:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. For the information of Senators, there will be two rollcall votes during Thursday's session of the Senate at 12:00 noon on the motion to discharge the Becerra nomination and at 1:30 p.m. on the motion to invoke cloture on the Haaland nomination.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator SULLIVAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

CONFIRMATION OF MICHAEL STANLEY REGAN

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we just voted on Secretary Michael Regan to be the new EPA Administrator. I want to congratulate him on his vote. He is now the new EPA Administrator.

I sit on the Committee on Environment and Public Works. So we had hearings for Mr. Regan—Administrator Regan, I guess we want to call him now—and I have had a number of conversations with him. I actually voted for him to move out of committee to come to the floor for this vote that we took today.

I like to come down to the floor to explain my votes because sometimes I support the Biden administration's Cabinet officials. I introduced Secretary of Defense Austin at his con-

firmation hearing. I served with him many years ago when I was a marine and he was a four-star general in the Army. I have a lot of respect for the Secretary of Defense.

Then there are other times when I am a "no." What I typically like to do is come and explain the noes but not always. On this one, for Secretary Regan, for Administrator Regan and his team, I want to explain it because I will say that I was impressed with him. I think he is qualified. He was essentially the EPA administrator for North Carolina. Both of his Republican Senators introduced him at his hearing and voted for him, I believe, today, and I have had good conversations with him as well.

Here is the thing: I was trying to get commitments from him. Now, this is very normal in the confirmation process. You work with the nominees and try to get commitments. Sometimes they give them, and sometimes they don't, but that is what we do—give advice and consent. We have been doing this since the Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution on what the Senate should be doing in these confirmation processes that we are going through right now with the Biden administration. So I wasn't asking for a lot in terms of commitments from this administration for the great State of Alaska, but it was important to me.

Why was it important to me?

Unfortunately, the Biden administration has launched a war on working families in Alaska. Now, that sounds like a pretty dramatic statement, "a war on working families in Alaska." What I am looking for is a ceasefire. My State, like a lot of States, is hurting economically. We are doing very well and I am very proud of Alaska on the health side. We are No. 1 in terms of vaccinations per capita in the country, which is remarkable, if you have been to my State, as it is so huge and the populations are so spread out, but we are working together, all of us, and we are achieving really remarkable results. We have been No. 1 in testing per capita throughout the whole pandemic, and we have had some of the lowest per capita death rates throughout the whole pandemic. But we are being really hit hard economically in the energy sector, the tourism sector, and the commercial fishing sector.

So why am I looking for a ceasefire?

In the first 2 months of the Biden administration, there have been eight Executive orders, if you include the recent statement by the President and the Prime Minister of Canada, which had a focus on Alaska, which have been focused on my State. Usually, it will be on economic development projects and usually on access to Federal lands. Eight. There is no State in the country that is getting that kind of attention from this administration, and we are hurting. It is not even close. Show me any other State represented in the U.S. Senate Chamber that has eight Executive orders directed at your State. It

won't exist. Trust me—my constituents don't like all the attention.

So I want to ask the President—not the Presiding Officer but the President: Mr. President, Mr. President Biden, sir, you were a U.S. Senator for three decades. Let me just ask you this question: If a Republican administration came into office and focused its attention on shutting down Delaware with eight Executive orders inside of 2 months, you would be on the floor every day like me, talking about it, asking for some relief. That is all we are asking for—a ceasefire on the hard-working families of Alaska.

This is what I asked Secretary Regan. A commitment on these is not a big issue. I told him, if I could get a commitment on these things, I would come down to the floor and give a speech in favor of his confirmation.

One was of a very big energy project in my State that has been permitted for almost 25 years. It started with the Clinton administration, in a place called the National Petroleum Reserve of Alaska, and was set aside by Congress for oil and gas development. That is what the NPR-A is. We do it responsibly, better than any place in the world, but this is a project that was started by the Clinton administration and moved forward by the Bush administration. There was a big NEPA environmental impact statement by the Obama administration, called the Integrated Activity Plan for NPR-A, which was approved. It was completely non-controversial because that is what this part of Alaska is set aside for. Then the Trump administration finalized a very large but responsibly developed energy project. We started it this winter with no controversy. It has estimates of 2,000 direct jobs, with thousands more indirect jobs. All we wanted was a commitment to keep it going. That is it—simple, status quo. Couldn't get it. Couldn't get it.

There is litigation with regard to this project right now. About 200 people—almost 200 workers—have been sent home with pink slips during a recession. Those were great jobs by the way. We tried to get a commitment on this. We couldn't get it. By the way, 75 percent of those 2,000 jobs were union jobs and high-paying—building trades, laborers, operating engineers, teamsters. They are great Americans, by the way. Seventy-five percent. Non-controversial. Twenty-five years of permits. No one has been against this. So I just wanted a commitment on it. No. Like I said, it is a war on working families.

Here is another one. Here is something that a lot of people don't know about Alaska: 60 percent of the country's wetlands, of America's wetlands, are in my State—six zero. Now, we have the most beautiful State. We love our wilderness. We love the outdoors. We care about the Alaskan environment more than anyone else and—trust me—more than anyone else in the